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9 JUN 1980

Mr. Richard O. Carden
Editor and Publisher
The Virginia Engineer
Cumberland, Virginia 23040

Dear Mr. Carden:

Thank you for your letter of May 21st, giving me your thoughts about our policy on CIA relations with the news media. Quite frankly I was shocked by the recent reaction from across the country to a question I answered after a speech at the meeting here in Washington of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. We announced our policy in December 1977 (copy enclosed) and had designed that policy to close any loopholes perceived in the policy announced in February 1976 by my predecessor. My policy was widely reported in December 1977, with a rather mild reaction to the so-called exception clause. There were lengthy open hearings on the subject of "The CIA and the Media" held by the Subcommittee on Oversight of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in December 1977 and in January and April 1978. I have testified about this policy in several open hearings since that time. In any case, I have made public assurances that we would make exceptions to our policy only in extraordinary circumstances when it was of grave concern to do so in the interest of national security. I have considered the use of newsmen only three times and for a variety of reasons those journalists were never used.

As you might imagine I have received considerable comment, both editorially and in letters, from journalists around the country. I must say that not many have had the courage to put their support in writing such as you have. I appreciate your taking the time to send such a thoughtful letter and want you to know that it has been a source of great encouragement. Many thanks and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
/s/ Stansfield Turner

STANSFIELD TURNER

Enc.
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